

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5294

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18761

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: CSCE, PINS, UR  
SUBJECT: IDA NUDEL'S IMPRISONMENT: AN INSIGHT  
INTO "CRIMINAL RUSSIA"

1. SUMMARY: A DISSIDENT SOURCE WHO VISITED IDA NUDEL AT SITE OF HER EXILE REPORTED ON HER MIS-TREATMENT BY FELLOW FEMALE PRISONERS DURING IMPRISONMENT. MS. NUDEL REPORTEDLY REQUESTED SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN PREFERENCE TO SHARING CELL WITH OTHER PRISONERS. END SUMMARY.

2. MS. NUDEL, WHO WAS IMPRISONED PRIOR TO AND DURING TRANSPORT TO TOMSKAYA OBLAST, WHERE SHE IS TO SPEND FOUR YEARS IN EXILE, WAS REPORTEDLY

"MORALLY" SHOCKED BY HER FELLOW FEMALE PRISONERS, MOST OF WHOM WERE AWAITING CONFINEMENT IN PRISON CAMPS FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. SHE REPORTEDLY TOLD SOURCE THAT SOME OF THE WOMEN, SEVERAL OF WHOM WERE QUITE YOUNG, HAD SPENT THE GREAT PORTION OF THEIR LIVES IN PRISON OR IN CAMPS, AND REPORTED A VERY HIGH RATE OF RECIDIVISM. OFTEN, ACCORDING TO NUDEL, THESE WOMEN COMMITTED  
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OFFENSES IMMEDIATELY UPON RELEASE FROM CAMPS SO THAT THEY MAY GO BACK TO THE ONLY LIFE THEY HAD KNOWN. THE PRISONERS TREATED MS. NUDEL, A POLITICAL PRISONER, SO POORLY (AT ONE POINT BREAKING HER GLASSES) THAT MS. NUDEL REQUESTED TO BE PLACED IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. MS. NUDEL STATED THAT SHE PREFERRED THIS SMALL CELL, SLEEPING

ON A COLD, INFESTED FLOOR TO SHARING QUARTERS WITH HER FELLOW PRISONERS. SHE DEVELOPED A SYMPATHY TOWARD HER MVD GUARDS WHO SHE CLAIMED "TREATED THE PRISONERS BETTER THAN THEY DESERVED".

3. COMMENT: MS. NUDEL'S REPORT TO DISSIDENT SOURCE CONFIRMS OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN VALERIY CHALIDZE'S "CRIMINAL RUSSIA." MS. NUDEL, THOUGH A LONG-TIME REFUSENIK AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST, HAD NO PREVIOUS CONTACT WITH THE SOVIET CRIMINAL POPULATION AND WAS REPORTEDLY AS SHOCKED AS WESTERNERS TO LEARN OF THE EXISTENCE OF THIS ELEMENT OF SOVIET SOCIETY. THE HIGH RATE OF RECIDIVISM REPORTED BY MS. NUDEL AMONGST HER FELLOW FEMALE PRISONERS CONFIRMS MR. CHALIDZE'S REPORTS THAT SOVIET PRISONS AND LABOR CAMPS ARE BREEDING GROUNDS FOR CRIMINALS, WHOSE PRIMARY FUNCTION IS PUNISHMENT RATHER THAN REHABILITATION. MS. NUDEL REPORTED THAT SOME OF THE GIRLS HAD BEEN BORN IN THE CAMPS. MS. NUDEL FURTHER CONFIRMED CHALIDZE'S OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE DIFFICULT TIME MOST POLITICAL PRISONERS EXPERIENCE AT THE HANDS OF THE CRIMINAL POPULATION OF CAMPS AND PRISONS. END COMMENT.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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